

Message Text

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22

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3946

INFO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

CINCPACREPPHIL SUBIC

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E O 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, RP, U.S.

SUBJ: SUBIC NAVAL BASE POST EXCHANGE ISSUE

REF: MANILA 5003

1. IN RESPONSE TO THE DFA REPORTED REFTEL, THE EMBASSY SENT A) A FORMAL NOTE AND B) THE SUBIC NAVAL BASE PRESS STATEMENT..THEY ARE SET OUT BELOW.

2. BEGIN TEXT OF NOTE

THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA PRESENTS ITS COMPLIMENTS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES AND HAS THE HONOR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE DEPARTMENT'S NOTE DATED APRIL 8, 1976 CONCERNING U.S. NAVAL BASE, SUBIC BAY POST EXCHANGE SECURITY PROCEDURES.

THE EMBASSY APPRECIATES BEING INFORMED OF THE DIFFICULTIES THAT HAVE RECENTLY ARISEN FROM THESE PROCEDURES AND ACKNOWLEDGES THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE MATTERS BEING ADDRESSED PROMPTLY IN THE APPROPRIATE FORUM.

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SINCE BASE PROCEDURES FALL WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF

THE MUTUAL DEFENSE BOARD, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT BODY TO BE THE APPROPRIATE FORUM. ACCORDINGLY, THE EMBASSY HAS TAKEN STEPS TO ENSURE THAT U.S. NAVAL BASE POST EXCHANGE SECURITY PROCEDURES ARE RAISED ON AN URGENT BASIS IN THE MUTUAL DEFENSE BOARD SO THAT THE ISSUES ADDRESSED IN THE NOTE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MAY BE RESOLVED TO THE MUTUAL SATISFACTION OF OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS.

AS INDICATED IN THE PRESS STATEMENT RELEASED APRIL 10 BY U.S. NAVAL AUTHORITIES AT SUBIC BAY NAVAL BASE, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED, THE U.S. NAVY REGRETS THAT BASE EMPLOYEES WERE SUBJECTED ON MARCH 15 TO A SEARCH THAT THEY CONSIDERED PERSONALLY OFFENSIVE. TAKING THIS INTO ACCOUNT THE NAVY EXCHANGE WILL DEVELOP NEW SEARCH PROCEDURES COMPATIBLE WITH SECURITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE EXCHANGE AND THESE WILL BE DISCUSSED WITH THE EMPLOYEES UNION BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION.

LETTERS FROM THE NAVY EXCHANGE WILL BE ISSUED TO EACH EMPLOYEE SUBJECTED TO THE SEARCH ON MARCH 15 EXPRESSING THE NAVY'S REGRET THAT THE SEARCH AS CONDUCTED WAS CONSIDERED OFFENSIVE.

THE EMBASSY AVAILS ITSELF...ETC. END TEXT OF NOTE

3. BEGIN NAVAL BASE STATEMENT

THE FEDERATION OF PHILIPPINE EMPLOYEES AT THE U.S. BASES HAS CHARGED THAT FOUR EMPLOYEES OF THE NAVY EXCHANGE AT SUBIC BASE NAVAL STATION WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR A SECURITY SEARCH ON MARCH 15 WHICH WAS CONSIDERED PERSONALLY OFFENSIVE TO 25 NAVY EXCHANGE FILIPINA EMPLOYEES.

DURING THIS RANDOM SEARCH, EMPLOYEES WERE ASKED TO ENTER A COMFORT ROOM ONE BY ONE AND BE SEARCHED IN THE PRESENCE OF TWO U.S. FEMALE SECURITY GUARDS. THIS SEARCH AND SIMILAR SEARCHES IN THE PAST HAVE BEEN EFFORTS TO PREVENT PILFERAGE FROM THE NAVY EXCHANGE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND THEREBY ENSURE THAT MERCHANDISE IS NOT REMOVED FROM THE U.S. NAVY BASE IN VIOLATION OF PHILIPPINE LAW.

THE REQUIREMENT FOR SEARCHES HAVE BEEN WELL RECOGNIZED BY THE UNION AS WELL AS BY MANAGEMENT. THE U.S. NAVY REGRETS THAT BASE EMPLOYEES WERE SUBJECTED ON THAT DATE TO A SEARCH THAT THEY CONSIDERED PERSONALLY OFFENSIVE. TAKING THIS INTO ACCOUNT THE NAVY EXCHANGE

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END NAVAL BASE STATEMENT
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